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| | Filing Date | August 30, 1999 | |
| | First Named Inventor | Takao OGAWA | |
| | Group Art Unit | 1774 | |
| | Examiner Name | Camie S. Thompson | |
| Total Number of Pages in This Submission | | Attorney Docket Number | 740186-13 |

| ENCLOSURES (check all that apply) | | |
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:)
Takao OGAWA) Group Art Unit: 1774
Serial No. 09/385,574) Examiner: Camie S. Thompson
Filed: August 30, 1999)
For: LIGHT SHIELDING BLADE MATERIAL)
FOR OPTICAL APPARATUS)

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

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Synette E. Jam

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The basis of rejection is that “the specification does not specifically disclose that there are no reinforcing fibers in the shield coating as per amended instant claim 1.” To the contrary, the applicants’ specification makes it abundantly clear to a person of ordinary skill in the art that the recited shield coating of amended claim 1 contains no reinforcing fibers. For example, the applicants’ specification states, in discussing the prior art in the paragraph bridging pages 5 and 6, that

“Upon applying a plastic film material to a light shielding blade for an optical apparatus, the planarity is another important feature as well as the light shielding property described above. One significant problem is a low yield caused by a poor planarity in applying a carbon fiber composite resin laminate “CFRP” to the light shielding blade for the optical apparatus. In addition, the CFRP has an insufficient light shielding property due to kink of the fibers. To improve the light shielding property, the carbon black may be kneaded into the matrix resin. However, a prepreg sheet in which the carbon black is kneaded in a specially high grade in a laminate obtained from such a prepreg sheet are quite expensive.”

Hence, the “Background . . .” section of the specification makes it clear that the presence of reinforcing fibers in a light shielding blade is incompatible with a light shielding function. While

this same paragraph points out that a light shielding function may be increased by the addition of carbon black into the matrix resin, it also points out that the resulted laminate is “quite expensive”. Thus this section of the specification sets forth the foundation of one of the primary features of the invention, which is the use of a shield coating which is structurally separate from a fiber reinforced member so that the necessary characteristics of both strength and light shielding are obtained. This feature is plainly evident in the first paragraph of the “Summary of the Invention” on page 6, as follows:

“To solve the above-mentioned conventional problems, the following measures are taken. Namely, a plastic light shielding blade material for an optical apparatus according to the present invention comprises a plastic film substrate, light shield coatings disposed on both surfaces of the plastic film substrate, and black lubricant coatings disposed on the light shield coatings through respective reinforcement members. Namely, the reinforcement members are interposed between the light shield coatings and the black lubricant coatings to obtain a laminate structure. . . . The reinforcement member is reinforced with continuous fibers drawn in an alignment direction. . . . Preferably, the light shield coating is composed of a paint resin containing carbon black, and the reinforcement member is composed of a thermo/setting resin containing no carbon black.”

Particularly when viewed in the context of the shortcomings of the prior art, the inference is clear that the claimed invention includes fiber reinforced members “containing no carbon black” to provide strength to the light shielding blade material, and light shield coatings “composed of a paint resin containing carbon black . . .” to provide the necessary light shielding characteristics.

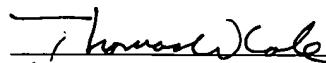
Further evidence demonstrating that the presence of reinforcing fibers in the light shield coatings would be grossly inconsistent with any reasonable interpretation of this application is present at the top of page 12 of applicants’ specification, wherein the light shield coatings are described as being “composed of a paint resin containing carbon black . . .” To a person of ordinary skill in the art, such a description would be interpreted to mean that the coatings are merely formed from a black paint. A dictionary definition of “paint” is “a mixture of a pigment in suitable liquid to form a closely adherent coating when spread on a surface and a thin coat.” (Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, page 847, copyright 1985). Paints include pigments; not reinforcing fibers.

Finally, the shield coatings in the specification are described in all the examples of the invention as being very thin, i.e. only 5 micrometers thick. By contrast, it is well known in the

art that reinforcing fibers typically comprise carbon fibers having a diameter of about 7 micrometers which, of course, would render it impossible to incorporate such fibers in such shield coatings while maintaining a 5 micrometer thickness. The thinness of the coatings, and the loss of light shielding ability that would occur with the addition of such fibers to such a thin coating, and the fact that all of the examples of the invention include a pair of PET fiber-reinforced films having more than enough strength to form a shutter blade material (see the graphs illustrated in Figures 2A and 2B, and the explanation in the first full paragraph on page 12) would clearly lead a person of ordinary skill in the shutter blade art to conclude that there can be no reinforcing fibers in the recited shield coating.

For all the above reasons, applicants' submit that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of all of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Now that all the claims are believed to be reliable, the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance is hereby earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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